



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 30 March 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
30 MARCH 1968

1. South Vietnam

The series of attacks forecast in "N-Day" messages has not yet materialized, but Communist intercepts still point to early wide-ranging actions.

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2. Jordan-Israel

Yesterday's exchange turned out to be short-lived, but it was fairly intensive while it was in progress. In addition to the artillery duel all along the Jordan valley, Israeli planes strafed Jordanian artillery positions.

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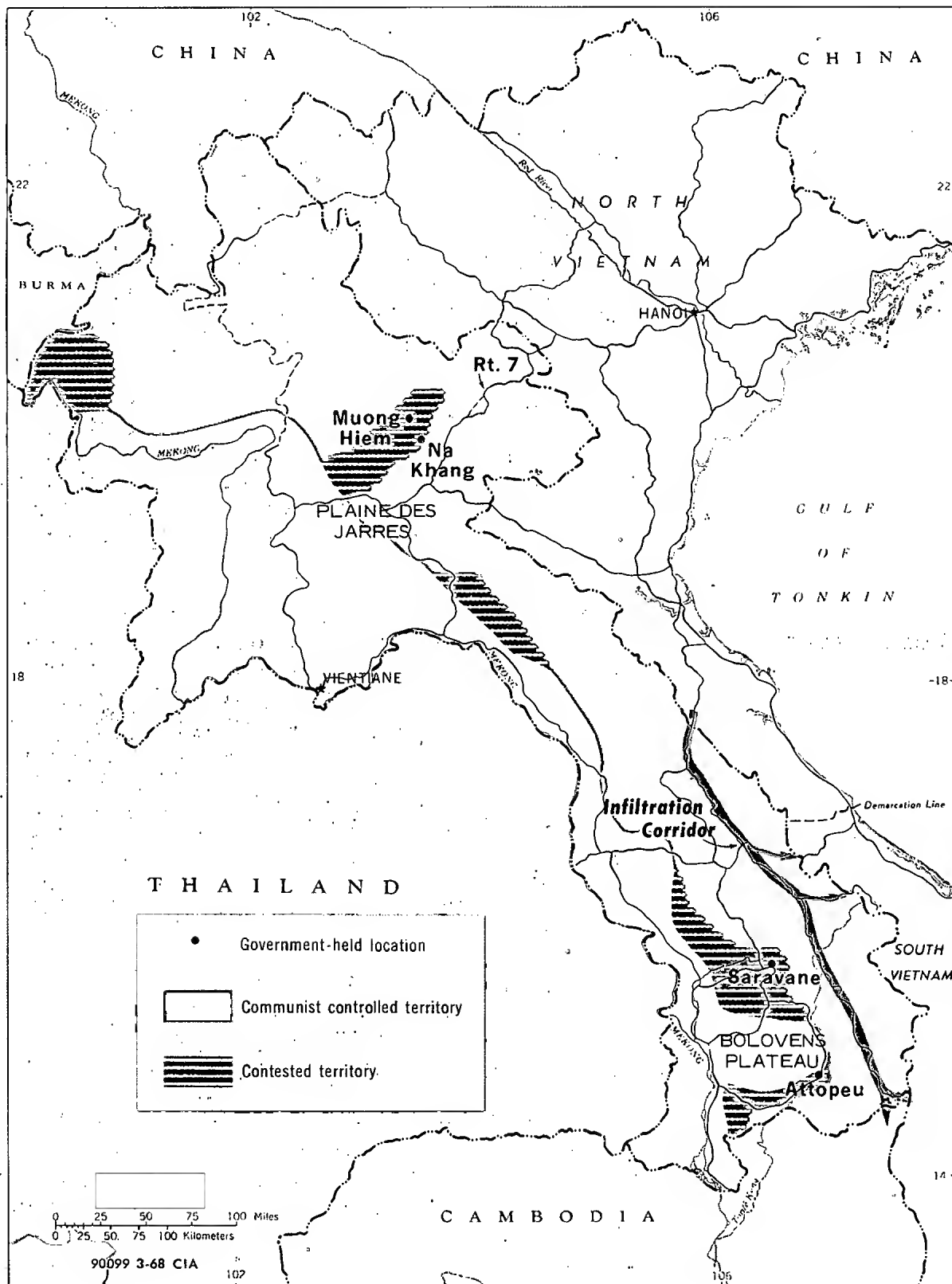
The Israelis may have held off on follow-up ground action because of domestic criticism of last week's attack. Critics said it cost too much in terms of lives and equipment for what was accomplished.

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Both Jordan and Israel have called for a Security Council meeting. The council is expected to meet at 10:30 this morning.

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Military Position in Laos Remains Unchanged



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3. Laos

Fighting has tapered off recently, but the Communists are capable of resuming their dry season offensive at any time. In the northeast, they have not yet made their expected attacks against two key government guerrilla bases, but we believe they will before the monsoon season starts in late May.

Heavy truck traffic from North Vietnam toward the Plaine des Jarres indicates that the Laotians may be on firmer ground than usual this year in making their annual prediction of a Communist offensive in that area.

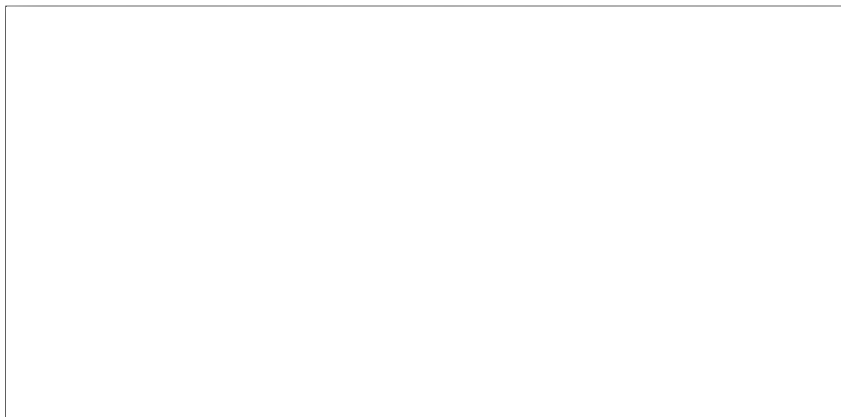
In the south, the North Vietnamese have not pressed their threat to Saravane and Attapeu. It may be that all they intended was to screen the substantial movement now under way of men and material through the infiltration corridor.

4. North Korea

Satellite photography of 16 March suggests the North Koreans have begun to take the Pueblo's electronic gear apart. Although the major antenna housings seem still to be intact, the boom of what looks like an automotive crane extends over the Pueblo's well deck. At the rate the dismantling process seems to be going so far, the North Koreans will probably have to hold the Pueblo for quite some time if they plan a full study of the ship and its gear.

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5. Cuba



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6. Guatemala

The army, obviously caught by surprise, has not yet reacted to President Mendez' sudden shakeup of the command structure.

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This may make it easier for the Communists to carry out their terrorism, however, which would soon get Mendez in hot water again with the military. The new defense minister, while popular, is probably not tough enough to keep the army in line.

7. Czechoslovakia

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8. Nepal

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of US
Political Attitudes



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30 March 1968

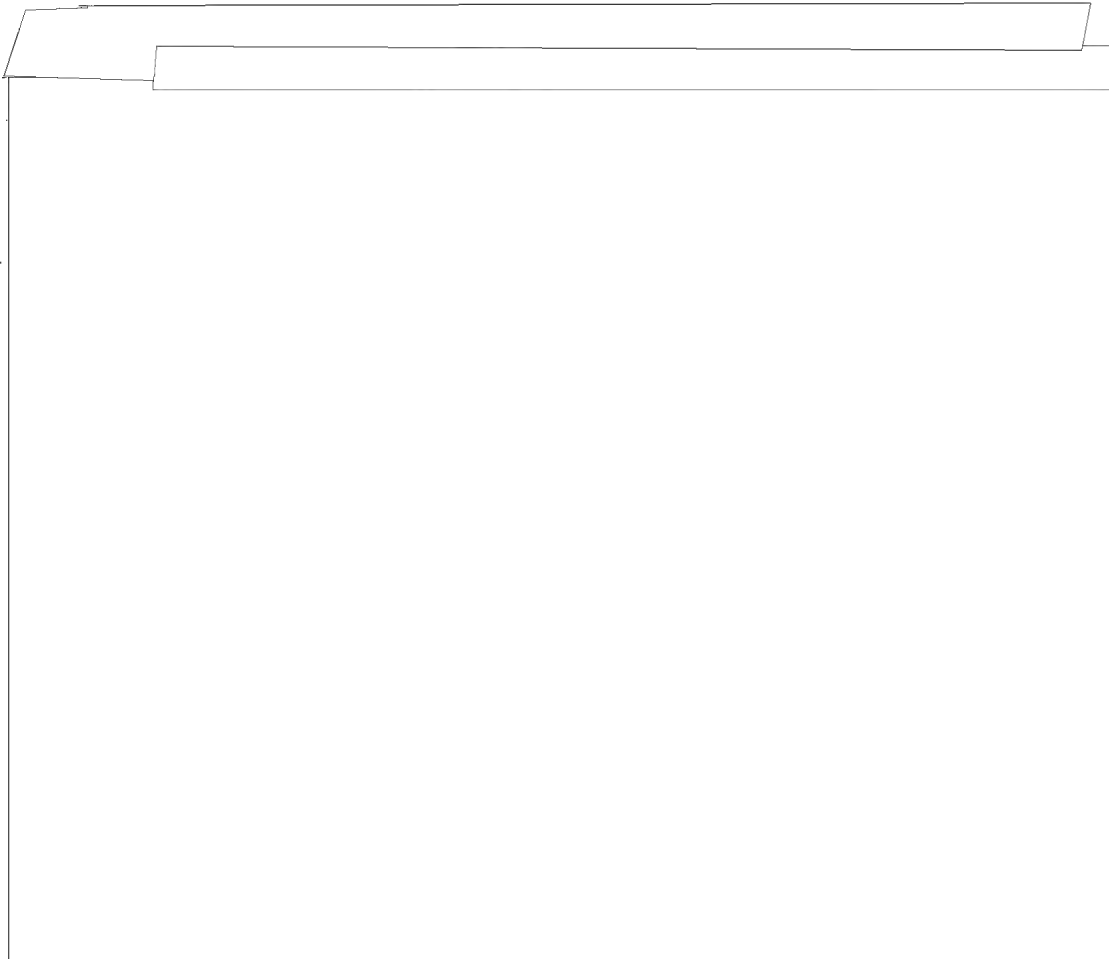
Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

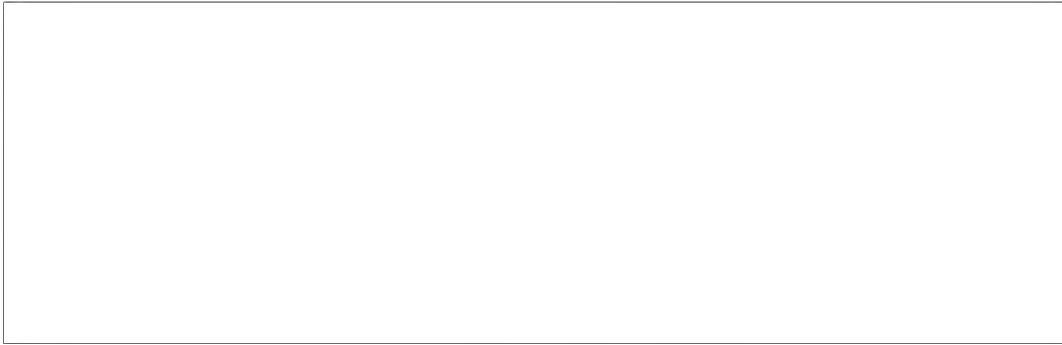


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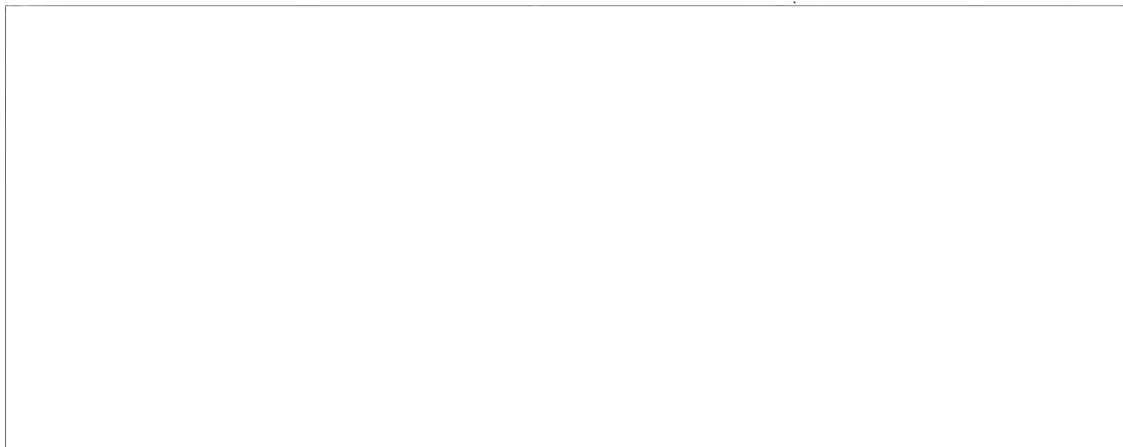


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Collingwood in Hanoi: CBS announced this morning that Charles Collingwood is in North Vietnam for an "indefinite stay." Collingwood went to Hanoi on yesterday's ICC flight from Vientiane.

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in the North Vietnamese capital [redacted] the population of the city is about 300,000. This represents a reduction of the city's prewar population by about two-thirds and is in line with the government's aim to evacuate more than half a million Hanoi residents. This goal was probably accomplished by last fall; [redacted] suggests that the regime has finally been successful in making it stick. Earlier evacuation measures have been frustrated by people gradually drifting back home.

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[redacted] the bombed-out railroad workshop at Gia Lam has not been repaired, but work continues at the yard on damaged locomotives.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Hanoi on Khe Sanh Defenses: A Hanoi radio international broadcast in English yesterday quoted a Christian Science Monitor article of 22 March on the military vulnerability of Khe Sanh. As usual, the broadcast selected out the Monitor's critical comments on US military defenses without adding much original commentary. This type of treatment is a standard North Vietnamese propaganda technique and seems to be deliberately chosen to appeal to Western audiences. The North Vietnamese are apparently aware that their own propaganda commentary does not go over well with foreign audiences. [redacted]

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In their brief broadcast of the article on Khe Sanh, for example, the North Vietnamese quoted the Monitor as saying the Marines at Khe Sanh were worried about their capability to maintain their supplies and to counter Communist firepower. They also highlighted the criticism of the straight-line trenching system at Khe Sanh, which made it possible for the enemy to roll grenades like bowling balls down the trenches.

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